

Message Text

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21

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 OMB-01

SAM-01 SAB-01 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 ACDA-19

DRC-01 /099 W

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O R 101031Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2405

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

USINT DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 2629

CAIRO AND JERUSALEM FOR SECRETARY'S PARTY

E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, IS

SUBJECT: SYRIAN-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS AND DOMESTIC COALITION TALKS

1. ISRAELI PRESS MAY 10 FOCUSES ON LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN SECRETARY'S MIDEAST MISSION, INCLUDING DESCRIPTION OF ALLEGED CONTENTS OF PRESIDENT'S LETTERS TO MRS. MEIR SECRETARY'S DISCUSSIONS WITH ISRAELIS AND SYRIANS, AND REACTION BY RABBI ISRAEL MILLER, NEWLY-ELECTED HEAD OF CONFERENCE OF PRESIDENTS OF JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS

OTHER MAIN PRESS ITEM IS STATUS OF COALITION NEGOTIATIONS FOR FORMATION OF NEW GOVERNMENT.

2. MAARIV (HARIF) ON FRONT PAGE REPORTS THAT AT LEAST THREE MESSAGES WERE SENT BY PRESIDENT TO MRS MEIR SINCE SECRETARY'S ARRIVAL IN ISRAEL LAST WEEK ASKING GOVT TO HELP
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SECRETARY IN HIS ASSIGNMENT. PRESIDENT STRESSED NEED FOR

FLEXIBILITY, AND URGED ISRAEL NOT TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY OF SPOILING CHANCES FOR PEACE IN MIDDLE EAST. HARIF STATES JERUSALEM SOURCES THINK THESE MESSAGES WORKED, ALTHOUGH GOVT. MIGHT HAVE COME TO SAME CONCLUSIONS WITHOUT THEM. ALSO, REPORTS AUTHORITATIVE JERUSALEM SOURCES SAYING ISRAEL CANNOT BACK AWAY ANY FURTHER FROM DISENGAGEMENT PRINCIPLES.

3. HARIF (MAARIV) IN SEPARATE LENGTHY COMMENTARY WRITES THAT REPRESIDENT'S LETTER WARNED ISRAEL NOT TO TAKE ON ITSELF RESPONSIBILITY OF DESTROYING OPPORTUNITY WHICH HAS BEEN CREATED TO BRING PEACE TO MIDDLE EAST. HARIF ALSO CLAIMS THAT SECRETARY EMPHASIZED TO ISRAELIS THAT, WHILE HE WAS NOT APPLYING PRESSURE, HE WAS UNCERTAIN WHAT US REACTION WOULD BE IN EVENT OF ANOTHER WAR AND IT WAS DOUBTFUL THAT ANOTHER US AIRLIFT COULD BE ORGANIZED. SECRETARY ALSO REMINDED ISRAELIS NOT TO FORGET OIL WEAPON. SECRETARY REPORTEDLY WAS ANGERED BY JOSEPH KRAFT'S REPORT FROM DAMASCUS ALLEGING THAT HE FAVORED CONTROLLED TENSION ON SYRIAN-ISRAELI BORDER. HARIF FURTHER CLAIMS THAT GROMYKO'S DAMASCUS VISIT TOOK SECRETARY BY SURPRISE AND THAT KISSINGER-GROMYKO MEETING WAS SUPPOSED TO TAKE PLACE ONLY AFTER CONCLUSION OF MIDEAST TRIP. SECRETARY REPORTEDLY WARNED GROMYKO AT CYPRUS MEETING THAT US, IN EVENT OF NEW WAR, WOULD NOT ALLOW ISRAEL TO FALL.

4. DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER ALLON (WHO DEPARTED THIS MORNING FOR LONDON) IS REPORTED AS SAYING THAT ISRAELI PROPOSALS FOR DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT THAT SECRETARY IS TAKING TO DAMASCUS "CONSTITUTE THE BEST POSSIBLE OFFER ISRAEL CAN MAKE." ALLON STRESSED ISRAEL HAS DEMONSTRATED READINESS TO REACH AGREEMENT BY SHOWING GREAT UNDERSTANDING FOR SYRIA'S LEGITIMATE INTERESTS AND PRESTIGE AND AT SAME TIME ISRAEL IS TAKING CARE OF ITS OWN LEGITIMATE SECURITY INTERESTS.

5. PRESS REPORTS STATEMENT BY RABBI ISRAEL MILLER DURING VISIT IN ISRAEL THAT FACTS HAVE NOT BORNE OUT FEARS THAT SECRETARY WOULD LEAN OVER BACKWARDS TO PLEASE ARABS BECAUSE HE IS A JEW. RABBI MILLER ALSO REPORTEDLY SAID HE COULD NOT BELIEVE SECRETARY SAW LETTER REPORTEDLY ADDRESSED TO HIM RECENTLY BY HAIFA RESIDENT CONCERNING

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FATE OF SYRIAN JEWS. REGARDING REPLY FROM SECRETARY REPORTED BY ISRAELI PRESS TO EFFECT THAT FATE OF SYRIAN JEWS IS INTERNAL SYRIAN MATTER, RABBI MILLER IS QUOTED AS SAYING: "OBVIOUSLY THE ANSWER WAS WRITTEN BY A JUNIOR CLERK. HUMAN RIGHTS HAVE NO BOUNDARIES AND DR KISSINGER KNOWS IT."

6. ON DOMESTIC POLITICAL SCENE, PRESS REPORTS THAT MAY 9 MEETING OF LABOR ALIGNMENT KNESSET FACTION AND EXECUTIVE

DECIDED TO PROCEED WITH EFFORT TO FORM NEW GOVERNMENT NOW BUT, DUE TO INABILITY TO REACH CONSENSUS AS TO ITS COMPOSITION, LEFT ALL OPTIONS OPEN. GIVEN NRP'S CONTINUING REFUSAL TO ENTER NEW GOVERNMENT WITHOUT FURTHER CONCESSIONS ON RELIGIOUS ISSUES, RABIN SAID THAT HE FAVORED FORMING GOVERNMENT WITH INDEPENDENT LIBERALS (ILP) AND CITIZENS RIGHTS MOVEMENT (CRM), OR IF THIS PROVED IMPOSSIBLE WITH ILP ALONE. HE STRESSED THAT LABOR PARTY CANNOT AFFORD TO GO TO ELECTORATE AFTER HAVING FAILED TO FORM NEW GOVERNMENT.

7. PROPOSAL TO FORM 61-MEMBER GOVERNMENT CONTINUED TO FACE OPPOSITION WITHIN LABOR PARTY. LAST NIGHT'S HEATED MEETING WAS DOMINATED BY MRS MEIR'S OBJECTIONS TO GOVERNMENT INCLUDING CRM AND HE WALKOUT AFTER SECRETARY GENERAL YADLIN REFUSED TO ALLOW VOTE ON HER MOTION AGAINST SUCH A GOVERNMENT. MRS MEIR HELD THAT, IN MIDST OF CRUCIAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH SECRETARY, ISRAEL CANNOT AFFORD TO CHANGE ITS POLICY IN A DOVISH DIRECTION. "ALREADY IN THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT THE DOVES ARE MORE INFLUENTIAL THAN IN THE PREVIOUS ONE, AND WITH CRM THIS WOULD CHANGE POLICY ALTOGETHER." DESPITE HER STRONG RESERVATIONS MRS MEIR INDICATED THAT IF RABIN INDEED SUCCEEDED IN FORMING 61-MEMBER GOVERNMENT, SHE WOULD VOTE FOR IT IN KNESSET VOTE OF CONFIDENCE. SHE EXPRESSED HER OPPOSITION TO PROTRACTED CONTINUATION OF CURRENT CARETAKER GOVERNMENT, NOTING THAT PUBLIC DID NOT WANT TO SEE OLD GUARD HOLDING ONTO POWER ANY LONGER.

8. DECISION AS TO WHAT KIND OF GOVERNMENT TO FORM NOW PASSES TO 614 MEMBER LABOR PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE, WHICH IS STILL SCHEDULED TO MEET ON MAY 12.
KEATING

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